

**Board of County Commissioners
Leon County, Florida**

Policy No. 03-

Title: County Procedural Policy Regarding County Improvements to Roads in the Apalachicola National Forest
Date Adopted: August 26, 2003
Effective Date: August 26, 2003
Reference: Environmental Management Act, Article VII, Divisions 1, 5, and 7
Policy Superseded: None

It shall be the policy of the Board of County Commissioners of Leon County, Florida, that a new policy entitled "County Procedural Policy Regarding County Improvements to Roads in the Apalachicola National Forest" is hereby adopted, to wit:

Overview

The County's Public Works Department maintains certain Forest Service roads in the Apalachicola National Forest pursuant to the Cooperative Road Maintenance Agreement between the County and the U.S. Forest Service. This agreement also provides for making road improvements when such improvements are approved by both parties. A list of the Forest Service roads (or road segments) presently covered by the Agreement is provided in Table 1. These roads are all classified by the Forest Service as "forest development roads" and are illustrated in Figures 1 through 6.

The Apalachicola National Forest (the ANF) contains many valuable natural and cultural resources. Besides its cultivated timber stands, the wide array of environmental resources contained in the ANF are of great ecological and aesthetic value to the region. Forest Development Roads are of primary importance for the protection, administration, and utilization of the ANF. In some cases, such roads are important for the use and development of resources upon which communities within or adjacent to the ANF are dependent. They carry Forest Service traffic as well as public traffic including area residents, visitors, sportsmen, emergency service vehicles, waste management vehicles, and school buses. It is Forest Service policy that important Forest Development roads should be maintained and, if necessary, improved to a standard adequate to safely and economically accommodate all traffic using these roads. In maintaining and improving these key roadways, Leon County also seeks to ensure the safe and efficient passage of public and Forest Service traffic in keeping with the Forest Service's policies and objectives concerning Forest Development Roads. It is not the County's position, however, that ANF roads which are primarily used for limited recreational purposes should receive significant maintenance or improvements. Protection of the ANF's natural resources is more important than enhancing an avenue for potentially destructive recreational uses (for example, off-road vehicles, illegal hunting, etc.).

Substantial improvements and alterations to roads in the ANF, such as the application of Open-Graded Cold Mix emulsion asphalt (OGCM), could result in unanticipated adverse impacts to the forest's natural resources in some cases. In recognition of this possibility, the County will no longer conduct significant improvements to roads within the ANF without first preparing an Environmental Impact Analysis (EIA) based on Natural Features Inventory (NFI) and other information. It is already current County practice that such improvements cannot be implemented without obtaining an approved Environmental Management Permit from the Department of Growth & Environmental Management and this practice will continue.

Procedural Policy

For those roads listed in Table 1, with the exceptions of Back Forest Road and the eastern 1 mile of L.L. Wallace Road, a Natural Features Inventory (NFI) will first be prepared to document sensitive environmental features along and in the general vicinity of the roadways. An EIA will then be prepared in order to evaluate potential direct and secondary impacts of proposed road improvements, including improvements/alterations to road drainage

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systems and stormwater management facilities. Realignment of certain road segments may be evaluated as part of the EIA process if this seems warranted as may be alternative road/drainage improvement designs that could minimize adverse impacts or even result in positive environmental impacts. The County will solicit input and assistance from the Leon County Science Advisory Committee and the U.S. Forest Service during preparation and evaluation of both the NFI and the EIA and will also seek their comments concerning the scope of these efforts.

The County's Department of Growth & Environmental Management, Division of Environmental Compliance will have responsibility for review of the NFI and EIA. During review of the EIA, it may be readily evident that proposed improvements to a particular road will not result in significant environmental impacts. The improvements on this road segment will be allowed to proceed in such a case even though review of the entire EIA may not be complete, although Forest Service approval and an approved Environmental Management Permit will be required before improvements can be initiated. The EIA may indicate that proposed improvements to certain roads will likely result in unacceptable environmental impacts. In such cases the County may elect to delete this road or road segment from the Cooperative Road Maintenance Agreement entirely, continue general road maintenance activities but not pursue improvements, or determine that a separate evaluation of possible alternatives is warranted. In some instances, the EIA may conclude that proposed improvements to a particular road will likely not yield undesirable consequences but that certain aspects of the project design warrant more intensive evaluation. This additional evaluation would be performed as part of the Environmental Management Permit application review process when additional design details are known. Under this scenario, road improvements can be initiated upon Forest Service approval and issuance of the Environmental Management Permit, which may require project modifications.

The NFI/EIA process described above will be conducted simultaneously for all roads listed in Table 1. That portion of L.L. Wallace Road (FS 322) starting at Crawfordville Highway (US 319) and extending west approximately 1 mile will be excluded since this segment is already approved for application of OGCM. That portion of Back Forest Road (FS 363-B) identified in Table 1 will also be excluded since this road segment has already been stabilized with OGCM. Should additional improvements to these segments of Back Forest Road and L.L. Wallace Road be proposed in the future, these improvements will be subject to the review and permitting process outlined herein. Additional roads in the ANF may be added to the Cooperative Road Maintenance Agreement in the future. Any proposed improvements to such roads will be required to follow the same review and permitting process described herein unless this policy is amended.

The County's performance of general road maintenance activities within the ANF will not be subject to the review and permitting procedures described above. Such general or routine maintenance activities typically include dirt road grading, spot stabilization, traffic sign maintenance, removal of debris and fallen trees or tree limbs from roadways, maintenance of existing drainage ditches, culverts, and drainage turnouts, and similar activities. The County's Public Works Department will follow appropriate best management practices when performing general maintenance activities to minimize adverse environmental impacts to the greatest degree practicable.

General/routine maintenance activities do not include application of lignin sulfonates for stabilization purposes. At this time, the County does not intend to continue applications of such compounds nor does it foresee such applications in the future. Should the use of lignin sulfonates arise as a future consideration, any previously performed EIA would need to be amended to evaluate the possible environmental effects on a given road segment and any new EIA would need to address the application of lignin sulfonates if this practice is proposed.

It is recognized that emergency conditions may arise that require the County to conduct activities on ANF roads and road drainage systems that might typically be considered as beyond the scope of general/routine maintenance activities. Such activities may be necessary to protect the public health, safety, or welfare and may be necessary to curtail or remediate adverse environmental impacts. Any actions necessary to adequately respond to such emergency situations can be undertaken without following the environmental review and permitting procedures described herein.

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Applicability of Policy and Need for U.S. Forest Service Approval of Projects

It is emphasized that the procedural policy set forth above represents an internal County policy and is not applicable to the U.S. Forest Service. Proposed improvements to Forest Service roads may be subject to the U.S. Forest Service's own evaluation and decision-making process. Leon County will first coordinate with the U.S. Forest Service before the County initiates any evaluation and permitting process involving proposed County improvements to Forest Service roads. The U.S. Forest Service will retain the ultimate approval authority for any such improvements, regardless of the results of the County's own project evaluation and permitting process.

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Table 1
Forest Service Roads Maintained by the County
Under the Cooperative Road Maintenance Agreement

Forest Service Road Number	Road Name	Road Length (miles)	Road Location
303	Lonnie Gray Road	0.20	From intersection with CR 373 (Springhill Rd) south to Forbes Purchase Line
305	Rivers Road	0.32	From intersection with Forbes Purchase Line east to end of pavement (Crawfordville Hwy.)
305	E. W. Reeves Road	1.00	From intersection with CR 373 (Springhill Rd) east to F.S. 317 (Forest Rd)
317	Bice Road	1.62	From intersection with CR 373 (Springhill Rd) south to E.W. Reeves Rd (FS 305)
322	L. L. Wallace Road	4.00	From intersection with CR 373 (Springhill Rd) east to intersection with US 319 (Crawfordville Hwy.)
324	Dog Lake Tower Road	3.01	From intersection with CR 373 (Springhill Rd) west to F.S. 358 (J.B. Clark Rd.)
326	Joe Thomas Road	1.81	From F.S. 308 west to beginning of existing pavement
333	New Hope Church Road	0.51	From intersection with CR 373 (Springhill Rd) northwest to F.S. 324 (Dog Lake Tower Rd)
358	J.B. Clark Road (Tom Roberts Road)	3.27	From intersection with CR 373 (Springhill Rd) northwest to start of pavement at Silver Lake Rd.
363-B	Back Forest Road	0.34	From intersection with Old Woodville Rd. south around ballfield (Lewis Hall Athletic Complex)
370	Aenon Church Road	3.07	From intersection with FS 358 (Silver Lake Rd) east/northeast to National Forest boundary
378	Sam Allen Road	0.15	From intersection with CR 373 (Springhill Rd.) west/northwest 0.151 miles
380	Cypress Point Road	0.45	From intersection with CR 373 (Springhill Rd) east for 0.45 mile

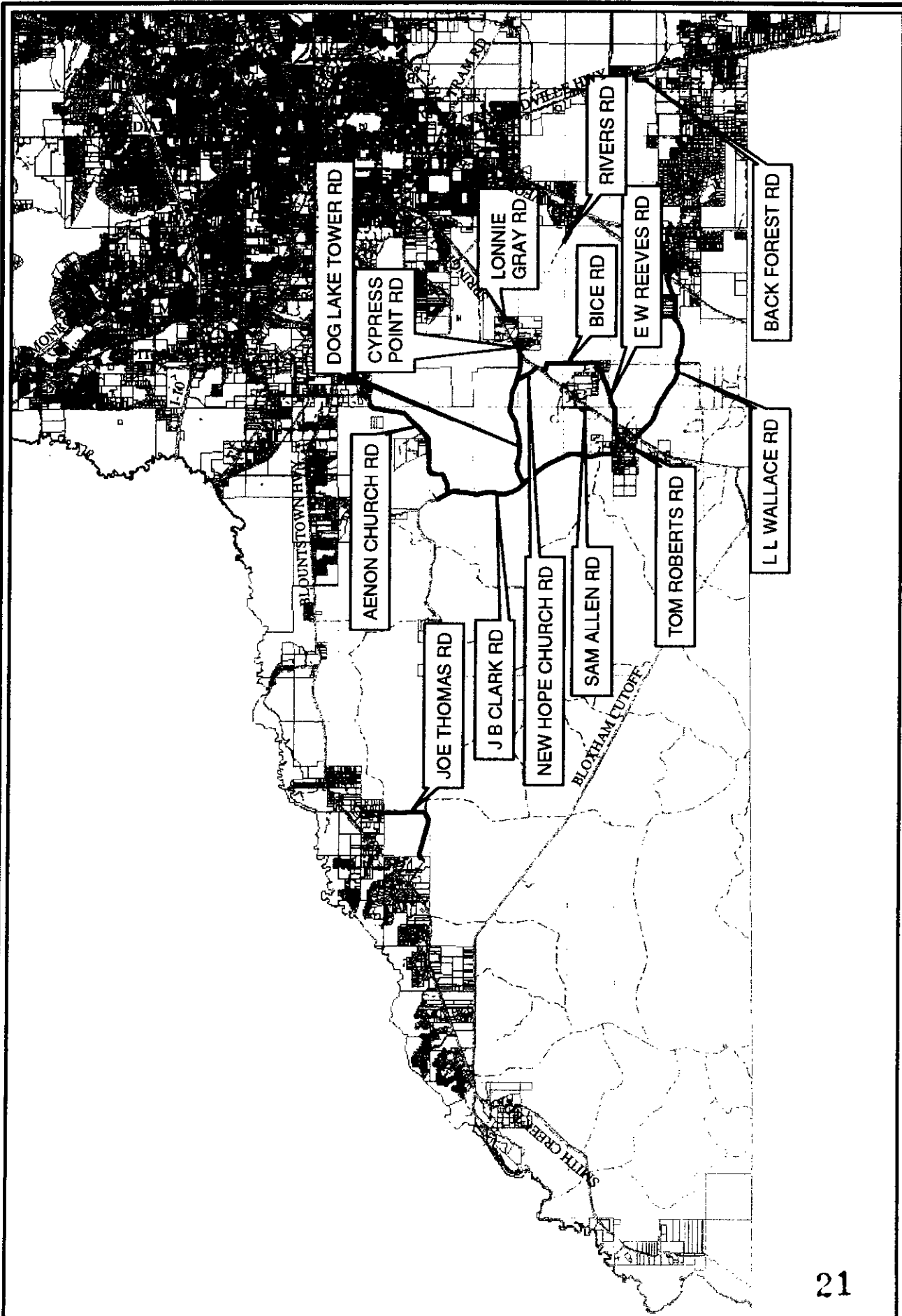


FIGURE 1

FOREST DEVELOPMENT RD



Due Diligence

This project has been completed from the most accurate source data that was available to the City of Chicago. The City of Chicago is not responsible for any errors or omissions, and it is to be understood that the information is not intended for use as a warranty or endorsement. Any reliance on the information is made solely by the user's own risk. Louis Currey and the City of Chicago assume no responsibility for any use of the information outside that which is intended for use by the City of Chicago. The project data may be used for any other purpose, but the user assumes all liability for any use of the data. The City of Chicago is not responsible for any use of the data for any purpose other than that which is intended for use by the City of Chicago.

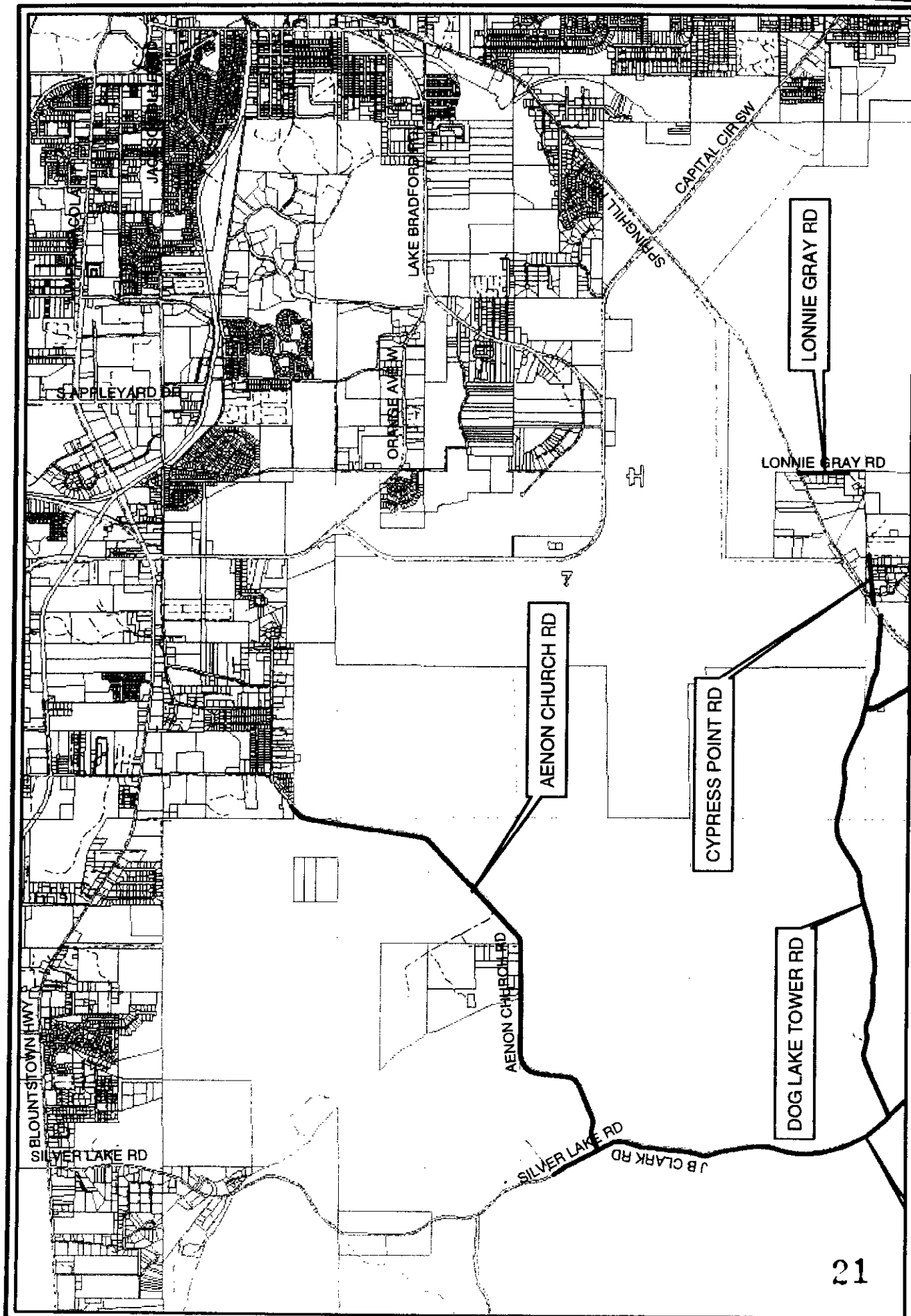


FIGURE 3

FOREST DEVELOPMENT RD



This project has been completed from the map information shown. The City of Tallahassee, Florida, is not responsible for the accuracy of the information shown on this map. The City of Tallahassee, Florida, is not responsible for the accuracy of the information shown on this map. The City of Tallahassee, Florida, is not responsible for the accuracy of the information shown on this map.

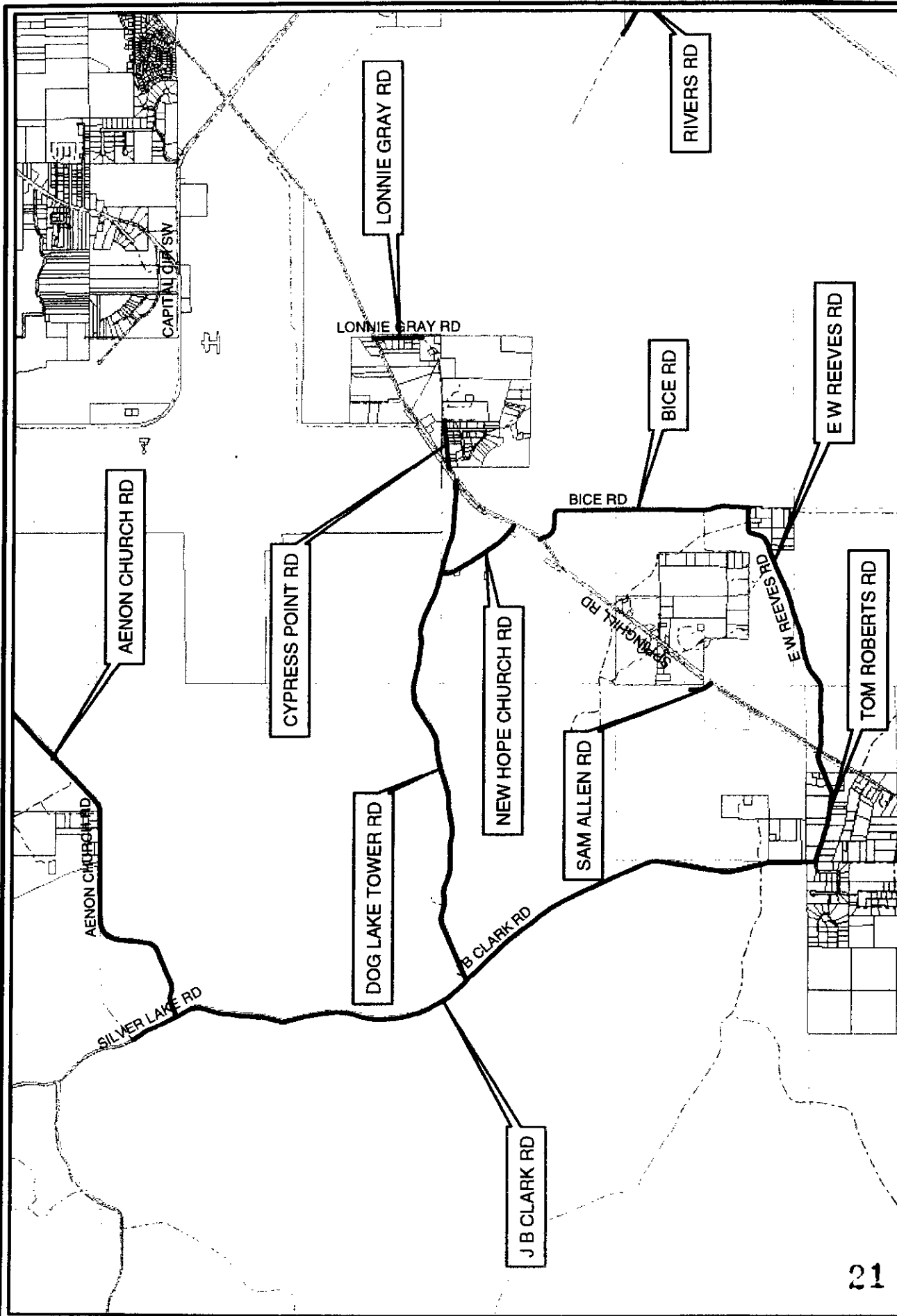


FIGURE 4

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March 06, 2002

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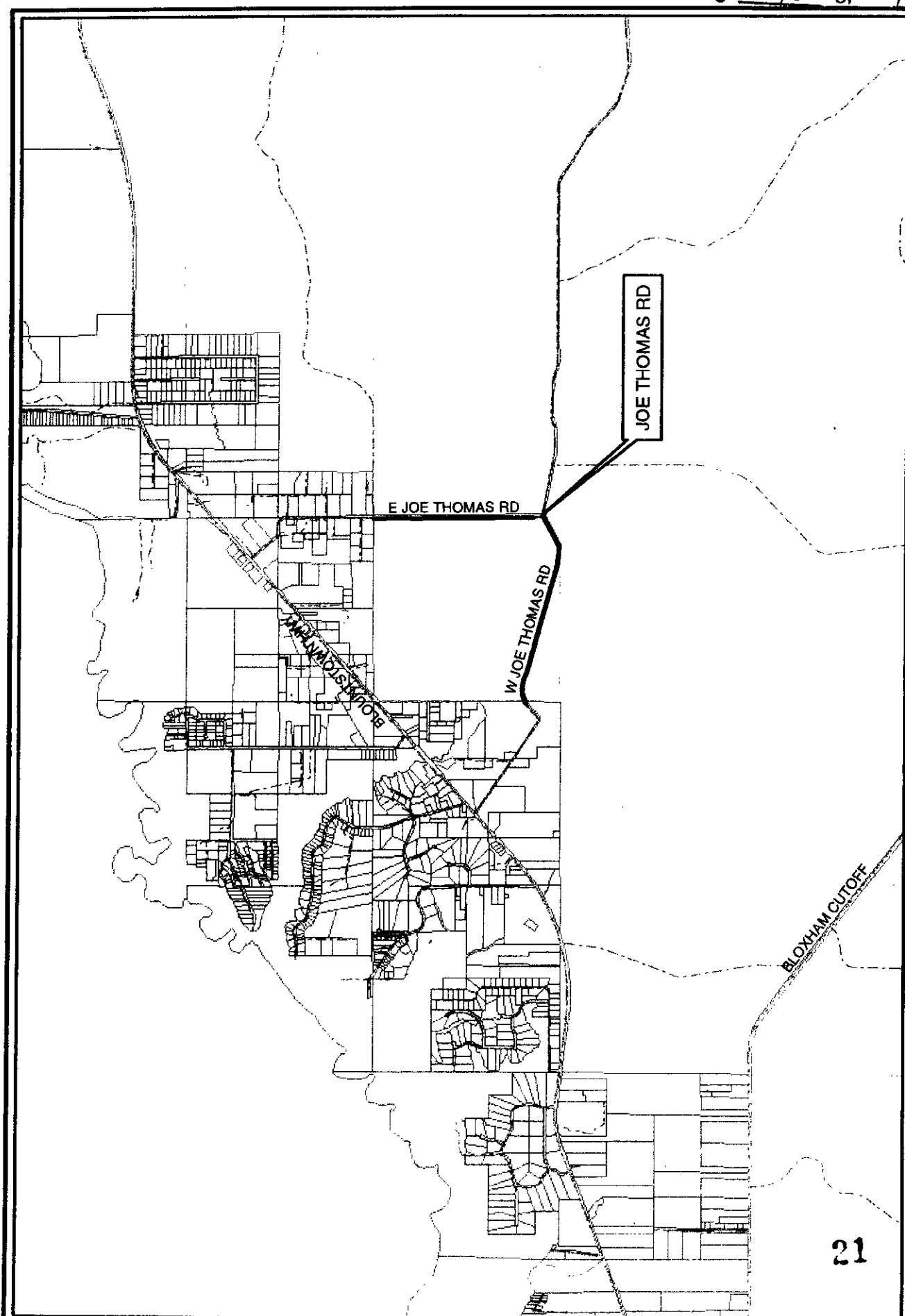


FIGURE 6

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